



**U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement**

July 18, 2006

# News Release

## **Methuen woman pleads guilty to immigration and social security fraud**

BOSTON--A Dominican woman residing in Methuen was convicted today in federal court of immigration fraud, social security fraud, and making false statements to federal agents.

United States Attorney Michael J. Sullivan; Leo J. Sullivan, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Social Security Administration's Office of the Inspector General, Office of Investigation in New England, and Matthew J. Etre, Acting Special Agent in Charge of Immigration and Customs Enforcement in New England, announced today that Marison Felix, age 37, of 10 Danbury Drive, Methuen, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Joseph L. Tauro to one count of theft of government property, one count of unlawful procurement of citizenship or naturalization, and two counts of making false statements to Government agents.

At today's plea hearing, the prosecutor told the Court that, had the case proceeded to trial, the Government's evidence would have proven that on April 12, 1993, Felix filed a Petition for Alien Relative, which purported to be signed by Luis Rosario, born in Puerto Rico in April 1966. This petition, together with other documents submitted by Felix in support of her immigrant visa application, purported to prove that she was married and living with a U.S. citizen by the name of Luis Rosario. As a result of these filings, Felix received her green card and permanent residence status despite her knowledge that the application was false and fraudulent in several material respects, including that the person Felix claimed was her husband, had died in 1989. Thus, he could not have signed and filed the Petition. Moreover, as Felix knew, the person she had been living with as her husband, the man who died in 1989, was not the real Luis Rosario born in Puerto Rico in April 1966. Instead, the real Luis Rosario was someone else, who did not live with Felix and did not support her for a visa.

Despite knowing that her green card was obtained fraudulently, on September 22, 2003, Felix applied for naturalization and thereafter became a naturalized citizen based upon her status as a legal permanent resident. Her application was materially false in that she represented that she was eligible for citizenship even though she knew otherwise. Moreover, she continued to claim that she lived with and was married to Luis Rosario of Methuen, even though the person who went by the name of Luis Rosario in Methuen had been dead for over a decade and had not been the real Luis Rosario.

The day after Felix submitted the false petition for alien relative purportedly signed by Luis Rosario, she submitted an application for herself and her minor child for social security survivorship benefits, claiming she was eligible because Luis Rosario was the father of her minor child and that Luis

Rosario had died in 1989. Both of these claims were false in that Felix knew that the father of her child, the man who died in 1989, was not the real Luis Rosario. Consequently, she knew that she and her minor child were both ineligible for social security survivorship benefits. Nevertheless, she collected these benefits to which she was not entitled – in a total amount of approximately \$80,000 – on behalf of herself and her minor child between 1993 and 2003.

Finally, during an investigation into these matters, Felix made false statements to government agents regarding the above conduct on November 6, 2003.

Judge Joseph L. Tauro scheduled sentencing for October 24, 2006. Felix faces up to 10 years' imprisonment, to be followed by 3 years of supervised release, a \$250,000 fine and restitution of approximately \$80,716 for the theft of government property charge. She also faces 10 years' imprisonment, to be followed by 3 years of supervised release, and a \$250,000 fine on the unlawful procurement of citizenship or naturalization charge, as well as five years' imprisonment, to be followed by 3 years of supervised release, and a \$250,000 fine on each of the two counts of making false statements to government agents or agencies. In addition, Felix's citizenship will be revoked, and she will be subject to deportation to her native Dominican Republic.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Social Security Administration's Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigation, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Seth P. Berman in Sullivan's Computer Crimes Unit and Linda M. Ricci in Sullivan's Economic Crimes Unit.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*